Proposal for the 3rd MMHN Conference

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Andrea Navagero, a Venetian humanist ambassador between Spain and France (1525-1529)

The Venetian humanist Andrea Navagero directly witnessed, being an Ambassador to the Emperor and to the King of France, the events which followed the Battle of Pavia (1525), the constitution of the Holy League, and the beginning of the Spanish pre-eminence on Italy and western Mediterranean.

After devoting an essay to the Viaggio (a posthumous narration of his diplomatic voyage to Spain and France, 1525-1528) and its relationships with the social and cultural network of its author,¹ and on the way to draw a biographical study of the ambassador, I would like to focus my paper on Navagero’s still unpublished Dispacci and to understand his key role as a line which divided Venetian politics of the late 20’s between Spain and France.

The approach to the sources will be a cultural history one, tending to insert the references to political (and commercial) action in a wider cultural context, i.e. the geopolitical attempt of tracing a new Venetian vision of the World represented by the Navigationi et Viaggi edited by Giovanni Battista Ramusio (1550-1565), a great friend and a correspondent of Andrea Navagero, to whom he asked to bring news on the New World from his Spanish journey. In consideration of these reasons, the paper seems to be suitable for one of the preference-topics of the session (The impact of geopolitical shifts, especially the discovery of ‘new’ lands, on Venice’s Mediterranean commercial policy).

Biographical Note

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Igor Melani is Researcher and Assistant Professor of Modern History at the University of Florence (Italy). After graduating at the University of Florence in 2001, with a thesis on the historical thought of Jean Bodin, he obtained his Ph.D. in History of Modern European Society at the University of Turin (Italy) under the direction of Prof. Corrado Vivanti (2006). He has been post-graduate Fellow at the Max Planck Institut für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte, Frankfurt am Main (Germany), post-doctoral Fellow and researcher at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris (France) where he worked with Maurice Aymard, Roger Chartier and Robert Descimon.


He is currently working on cultural and political imagery within the relationships of Italian Renaissance culture with European and non-European contexts.